

The DeBruhl House
Columbia, South Carolina

HABS No. 13-3

HABS
SC

40 COLUM,

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 13

Historic American Buildings Survey
Samuel Lapham, District Officer
42 Broad St. Charleston, S.C.

H.C.F.

THE DeBRUHL HOUSE
1401 LAUREL STREET, COLUMBIA, S. C.

SURVEY NO. 13-3

1.2
SC
40-Colum
-1-

The present owner of The DeBruhl House, Mrs. J. H. Sams, who acquired the building in 1920, gives the date of building as 1820. The design of the house is attributed to Robert Mills, and Jesse DeBruhl was the builder.

Mr. DeBruhl was twice married. His widow married a Mr. Wylie, and Mrs. E. C. Coker, of Columbia, says that during Mrs. Wylie's lifetime, between 1885 and 1895, the following changes were made: the small rear porch was removed and the present rear porches added; the bath was removed from the first floor to the basement; a window bay was added to the rear of the east room of the first floor; the stairs were removed from what is now the kitchen to their present position in the main hall.

Mrs. Wylie died in 1905, and Quitman Marshall, Esq., who next owned the house, added electricity and one bath.

During the present ownership, the following changes were made: furnace added; slate roof put on; baths on first and second floor added, and porch room on first floor rear; door cut in ground floor right rear room, opening into garden.

The Confederate general, James A. Johnston, made the residence his headquarters in 1865.

Sources of information: "Historic Houses of South Carolina"
Mrs. Harriet K. Leiding
Data given by present owner and
Mrs. E. C. Coker, of Columbia to
Mr. F. E. Sims, squad leader.

Approved
James H. [Signature]
District Officer #13

Reviewed 1936 by H.C. [Signature]

DeBRUHL-MARSHALL HOUSE

An addendum to
DeBruhl House
1401 Laurel Street
Columbia, South Carolina
in HABS Catalog (1941)

Address: 1401 Laurel Street (northeast corner of Laurel
and Marion Streets), Columbia, Richland County,
South Carolina

Present Owner: Mrs. George H. Rhodes

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement
of Significance: "A fine example of the Classic Style in Southern
domestic architecture. . ." /Quoted from the
historical marker placed in front of the house
by the Sesqui-Centennial Commission in 1936/

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This house was erected in 1820 and is locally attributed to Robert Mills. While it has a good many of Mill's characteristics, it does not in my opinion have quite the scale in details that would identify it as such. So far as the known records indicate, there is no basis to attribute the work to Mills.

The house was built for the DeBruhl family, a family long prominent in South Carolina political life, and the date of erection suggests it might have been built for Jesse DeBruhl. Jesse was very active in the public life of the city, and during the Harrison vs. Van Buren presidential campaign was the leader of The Democrats in Richland County. The DeBruhl family intermarried with another prominent local family named Marshall, and the house has for years been known as the DeBruhl-Marshall house. In the early part of this century the property was purchased by James H. Sams, for years a prominent Columbia architect. Sams died about 1938. The house was operated as a rooming house until 1947 and had gotten in a very poor state of repair.

In 1947 the property was purchased by Mrs. George H. Rhodes and restored as a residence. Mrs. Rhodes made so many interior changes that little remains of the original plan except the center hall and major rooms. The stair, which was originally in a room at the rear of the house, is now in the center hall.

The historical marker in front of the house, placed there in 1936 by the Sesqui-Centennial Commission, reads as follows:

"DeBruhl-Marshall House
A fine example of the Classic Style in
Southern domestic architecture. Built
in 1820, probably after a design by Robert Mills.
For almost 100 years the home of the DeBruhl and Marshall families."

Prepared by Walter F. Petty
AIA Preservation Officer
December 1961

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Handsome, Classic-Revival mansion.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 55'-10 1/4" (five-bay front) x 37'-0 1/2", two-and-a-half stories on an elevated basement.
2. Foundations: Coursed, stuccoed brick.
3. Wall construction: Red brick, laid in Flemish bond; stone belt course between first and second stories; 17" thick.
4. Porches: Wide front portico, raised on masonry arcade, with four round Tuscan columns of stuccoed brick; simple pediment; pilasters at wall. Heavy granite steps to portico at center. Square, stone paving on floor; delicate wrought-iron railing.
5. Chimneys: Two simple brick chimneys.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Folding, six-panel front door, side lights and recessed panels; large, well-detailed fan light over.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Side and front windows, first and second floors--Flat keystone arches; double-hung, six-over-six light wood sash; louvered shutters on long strap hinges with "S"-shaped shutter dogs. Basement windows--Smaller windows, eight-over-eight light; solid shutters on long strap hinges with "S"-shaped shutter dogs.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof with pediment at front, wood shingles.
- b. Cornice: Heavy wood cornice.

C. Technical Description of Interiors: Little remains of the original plan except the center hall and major rooms. The stair, originally in a room at the rear of the house, is now in the center hall. The floors throughout are of wide old pine boards. The present owner (Mrs. Rhodes) has furnished the house in antique furniture (mostly heirlooms) and in excellent taste. The house is kept in a very good state of repair, and quite a bit of the original hardware remains.

D. Site:

- 1. Orientation and general setting: The house faces south-east on a corner city lot.
- 2. Enclosures: Simple, Victorian iron fence in front of house; serpentine brick wall at rear.
- 3. Outbuildings: None.
- 4. Walks: Cement walk to front steps; brick walks at rear.
- 5. Landscaping, gardens: Fine garden with shrubs, flowers, and trees; several large magnolias.

Prepared by Walter F. Petty
AIA Preservation Officer
December 1961
AND
James C. Massey, Architect
National Park Service
July 1961